

Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police Blotter: July 9-15

Reminder for the week: Recreational crabbers should review rules before crabbing

DOVER – To achieve public compliance with laws and regulations through education and enforcement actions that help conserve Delaware's fish and wildlife resources and ensure safe boating and public safety, DNREC Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police officers between July 9-15 made 3,625 contacts with anglers, boaters, and the general public, issuing 55 citations. Officers responded to 105 complaints regarding possible violations of laws and regulations or requests to assist the public. An increased Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police presence continued at the C&D Canal Conservation Area and Michael N. Castle Trail.

Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police in the Community

- On July 10-14, Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police officers held their Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police Advanced Youth Academy at the Little Creek Hunter Education Building, near Little Creek. Twelve kids, ages 12-15, participated and received their turkey hunter education course certificates.
- On July 12, Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police officers discussed the role of Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police officers and answered hunting, fishing, and boating questions for kids attending the White Clay Creek State Park's Adventure Rangers summer camp. The campers were taken on a police boat ride as well.
- On July 14, Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police

officers attended the annual Nanticoke Riverfest Float-In near Seaford where they patrolled on a vessel to ensure the safety of the approximate 2,000 attendees floating on the Nanticoke River.

Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police Action

Incident of note:

- On July 9, Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police officers cited an individual for one count of unlawful to rehabilitate any wildlife without a permit following an investigation of a white tail deer fawn being kept and rehabilitated in an apartment near Wilmington. The individual was fined \$107, including court costs and released. The fawn was transported to a certified wildlife rehabilitator for treatment and eventual release.

Citations issued by category, with the number of charges in parentheses, included:

Wildlife Conservation: Unlawful to rehabilitate any wildlife without a permit (1).

Fisheries Conservation: Possession of undersized blue crab (13), unlicensed fishing (7), trespass to fish (1), use of recreational crab pots without required turtle excluder (1), recreational crab pot tampering (2), over-the-limit recreational crab pots (1), clamming in a prohibited area (2), and possession of over-the-limit hard clams (1).

Boating and Boating Safety: Operating a vessel with insufficient number of life jackets (5), water skiing without a life jacket (1), failure to observe slow no wake (1), no boat registration card in possession (2), no life jacket on a child age 12 or younger as required by law (4), operating an

unregistered vessel (3), negligent operation of a vessel (1), failure to maintain a proper lookout – rear observer on PWC (1), and operating a personal watercraft without a life jacket (1).

Public Safety: Possession of marijuana – civil (1) and operating a motor vehicle at an unreasonable speed (1).

Other: Operating a motor vehicle off an established roadway on a state wildlife area (1), trespassing after hours on a state wildlife area (3), and damaging state property (1).

DNREC's Division of Fish & Wildlife recognizes and thanks the majority of anglers, hunters and boaters who comply with and support Delaware's fishing, hunting and boating laws and regulations. Citizens are encouraged to report fish, wildlife and boating violations to the Delaware Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police by calling 302-739-4580. Wildlife violations may also be reported anonymously to Operation Game Theft by calling 800-292-3030 or online at de.gov/ogt.

Are you AWARE?

Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police remind recreational crabbers to review state regulations governing blue crabs, including the required use of a turtle by-catch reduction device in recreational crab pots.

A turtle by-catch reduction device is attached in the funnel entrance of a recreational crab pot to reduce the possibility of diamondback terrapins entering the pots and drowning. The device is a rigid metal or plastic rectangular frame that measures 1.75 inches by 4.75 inches. By-catch devices are available at local tackle shops or may be handmade of heavy wire.

Other Delaware crabbing regulations include:

- A Delaware recreational fishing license is required for

crabbing.

- The recreational daily limit on blue crabs is one bushel per person.
- Minimum “keeper” size for male blue crabs and immature female crabs with the V-shaped apron is 5 inches, measured across the shell from point to point.
- Mature female crabs, identified by the U-shaped apron, are exempt from the minimum size of 5 inches because many females reach maturity at a smaller size.
- Mature female blue crabs bearing eggs, known as sponge crabs and recognizable by the orange eggs visible under the apron, may not be taken and must be returned to the water immediately.
- Recreational crabbers may not use, place, set or tend more than two crab pots.
- Recreational crab pots must be tended by the owner at least once every 72 hours and must be marked with white buoys with the owner’s name and permanent mailing address.
- Recreational crabbers are prohibited from selling blue crabs; only commercially-licensed crabbers are permitted to offer blue crabs for sale in Delaware.

More information on crabbing in Delaware is available in the [2018 Delaware Fishing Guide](#). The guide also is available in printed form at DNREC’s Dover licensing desk, and from [license agents throughout the state](#).

Media Contact: Sgt. Brooke Africa, 302-382-7167, or Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police, 302-739-9913